William Blake (1757–1827)

- Classified as a Romantic, but also is considered a pre-Romantic
- Largely obscure in his own lifetime; very celebrated as a Romantic since and as a half-mad or tortured genius (itself a sort of Romantic impulse)
- Worked exclusively in London in an artist’s district
- Worked professionally as an artist: an engraver, print maker, and illustrator
- Believed in the Bible, but very much criticized the Church of England
- Heavily influenced by the American and French Revolutions

Hecate (or, The Three Fates) (1795). Colour Print. 48 x 58cm. Tate Gallery (London).
Many of his texts and poems were published in illuminated manuscripts.

“Without Contraries is no progression. Attraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy, Love and Hate, are necessary to Human existence.”

“Prisons are built with stones of Law, Brothels with bricks of Religion.”

—William Blake

*The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (c. 1790)

*The Great Red Dragon and the Woman Clothed in Sun* (c. 1806-1809). Watercolour. 34 x 42cm. Brooklyn Museum, New York.

*Ancient Days (God as an Architect)* (1794). Relief etching with watercolour. 23 x 17cm. British Museum, London.